



RIVETS

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

Daniel J. McKee **Governor**

Kasim J. Yarn **Director**

April 13, 2021

The Honorable Marvin L. Abney, Chairman
House Committee on Finance
State House, Room 35
Providence, RI 02903
via email: rep-abney@rilegislature.gov and HouseFinance@rilegislature.gov

RE: Support for 2021 H-6122 – Article 16 – Relating to Housing

Dear Chairman Abney:

No Veteran – and no Rhode Islander – should be without a home. The Rhode Island Office of Veterans Services (RIVETS), and our community partners, are committed to ending homelessness among Veterans. Our focus is threefold:

- Conducting coordinated outreach to proactively seek out Veterans in need of assistance; and
- Connecting homeless and at-risk Veterans with housing solutions, health care, community employment services and other required supports; and
- Collaborating with federal, state and local agencies, employers, housing providers, faith-based and community non-profits, and others to expand employment and affordable housing options for Veterans exiting homelessness.

Our RIServes network offers service members, Veterans, and their families 'no-wrong-door' access to a continuum of providers allowing them to obtain the full range of comprehensive services required to achieve their unique goals.

We know that stable housing is vital to many Veterans' success. In recent years, and throughout the pandemic, our RIServes network has seen an increase in referrals of Veterans and military families who are struggling to find affordable housing.

I am writing on behalf of RIVETS in support of H-6122, An Act Making Appropriations for the Support of the State for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2022 – Article 16 – Relating to Housing. Article 16 modernizes the Housing Resources Commission; establishes a new Housing Resources Coordinating Committee and Deputy Secretary; and codifies the role of the Office of Housing and Community Development to improve coordination on policy, planning, and financing. Section 2 also incentivizes housing production and municipal housing development partnerships. These actions will ultimately increase the availability of affordable housing across Rhode Island and help strengthen communities.

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Investments in the Governor's proposed FY 22 Budget provide housing stability and will ensure that they state has housing options needed for all Rhode Islanders moving forward. Article 16 implements oversight structures ensuring that strategies are well coordinated, and I strongly support passage.

Thank you for your continued partnership and advocacy.

Regards,



Kasim J. Yarn
Director

cc: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance
Nicole McCarty, Esquire, Legal Counsel to the Speaker